

REMARKS

This Amendment responds to the Office Action mailed July 31, 2007. Claims 1-14 and 16 remain pending in the application prior to this amendment, and stand rejected. Claims 1 and 14 have been amended herein, and new claims 17 and 18 have been added. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-3, 6-11, 13, 14, and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,568,008 to Siepmann et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,013,089 to Abu-Isa et al. and U.S. Patent No. 5,582,463 to Linder et al. Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Siepmann '008, Abu-Isa '089, and Linder '463, in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,163,903 to Weismiller et al. Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Siepmann '008, Abu-Isa '089, and Linder '463, in further view of U.S. Patent No. 3,334,951 to Douglass, Jr. et al. Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Siepmann '008, Abu-Isa '089, and Linder '463, in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,880,189 to Welling et al.

Claims 1 and 14 are the only independent claims of these rejected groups and are directed to articulating medical tables. Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the seat section includes "a seat substrate including a first central aperture therethrough . . .

said seat frame removably coupled to said seat substrate such that said second central aperture is in registration with said first central aperture." Claim 14 has been similarly amended. Support for these amendments can be found in the Application at paragraph 0021 and with reference to FIGS. 3, 4A, 4B, and 5. Accordingly, no new matter has been added by the amendments to claims 1 and 14.

Applicants assert that amended claims 1 and 14 are not disclosed by the references of record. Specifically, the Examiner admits that Siepmann '008 fails to teach a seat section comprising a seat frame including a planar surface with a central aperture therethrough and a layer of web material extending directly across the central aperture and secured to the planar surface of the seat frame, as set forth in claims 1 and 14. Siepmann '008 also fails to disclose a seat substrate including a central aperture therethrough, the seat frame removably coupled to the seat substrate such that a central aperture of the seat frame is in registration with the central aperture of the seat substrate, as recited in claims 1 and 14. The further combination of Siepmann '008 with Abu-Isa '089 and/or Linder '463, or other references of record fail to cure these deficiencies. For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of claims 1 and 14 be withdrawn.

Claims 2-13 each depend from independent claim 1, and claim 16 depends from independent claim 14. Accordingly, claims 2-13 and 16 are in condition for allowance for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to independent claims 1 and 14. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that the rejections of claims 2-13 and 16 be withdrawn.

New Claim

New claims 17 and 18 have been added by this Amendment. New claim 17 depends from independent claim 1, and new claim 18 depends from independent claim 14. Claims 17 and 18 further recite that the seat substrate is hingedly coupled to the back section of the articulating medical table. Support for claims 17 and 18 can be found in the Application at paragraph 0021, and with reference to FIGS. 3, 4A, 4B, and 5. Accordingly, Applicants assert that no new matter has been added by new claims 17 and 18. Applicants further submit that new claims 17 and 18 are in condition for allowance for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claims 1 and 14. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request early and favorable indication of allowance of claims 17 and 18.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments to the claims and the remarks set forth herein, Applicants believe this case is in condition for allowance and respectfully request allowance of the pending claims. If the Examiner believes any matter requires further discussion, the Examiner is respectfully asked to telephone the undersigned attorney so that the issue may be promptly resolved. The Examiner's prompt attention to this matter is appreciated.

Applicants do not believe that any fees are due as a result of this communication. However, if any fees are necessary to complete this communication, the Commissioner may consider this to be a request for such and charge any necessary fees to Deposit Account No. 23-3000.

Respectfully submitted,

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